

PCT

WORLD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ORGANIZATION  
International Bureau



INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

<b>(51) International Patent Classification 6 :</b> <b>A61F 13/56 // 13/15</b>		<b>A1</b>	<b>(11) International Publication Number:</b> <b>WO 95/27461</b> <b>(43) International Publication Date:</b> <b>19 October 1995 (19.10.95)</b>
<b>(21) International Application Number:</b> <b>PCT/SE95/00390</b>			<b>(81) Designated States:</b> AU, CA, CN, CZ, FI, HU, JP, MX, NO, NZ, PL, SK, US, European patent (AT, BE, CH, DE, DK, ES, FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE).
<b>(22) International Filing Date:</b> <b>11 April 1995 (11.04.95)</b>			
<b>(30) Priority Data:</b> 9401226-7 12 April 1994 (12.04.94) SE			<b>Published</b> <i>With international search report.</i> <i>In English translation (filed in Swedish).</i>
<b>(71) Applicant (for all designated States except US):</b> MÖLNLYCKE AB [SE/SE]; S-405 03 Göteborg (SE).			
<b>(72) Inventors; and</b> <b>(75) Inventors/Applicants (for US only):</b> KLING, Robert [SE/SE]; Vävaregatan 13, S-511 63 Skene (SE). WIDLUND, Urban [SE/SE]; Päronvägen 5, S-435 43 Mölnlycke (SE). HEDLUND, Gunilla [SE/SE]; Musselvägen 5A, S-459 33 Ljungskile (SE).			
<b>(74) Agents:</b> HYLTNER, Jan-Olof et al.; Noréns Patentbyrå AB, P.O. Box 27034, S-102 51 Stockholm (SE).			
<b>(54) Title:</b> A METHOD OF MANUFACTURING A PANTS-TYPE DIAPER OR A SANITARY PANTY, AND ONE SUCH ABSORBENT ARTICLE			
<b>(57) Abstract</b> The present invention relates to a method of manufacturing an absorbent article in the form of a pants-type diaper or a sanitary panty, starting from a flat blank (A-C) which includes an elongated absorbent body (5) enclosed between two casing sheets (2, 9) which at opposing front and rear end parts of the absorbent body have side parts (19, 20 and 21, 22 respectively) which extend laterally beyond the body on both sides thereof, said method comprising the step of folding the blank around a transverse axis so that the end edges (16, 17) of the side parts lie edge-to-edge. According to the invention, at least one folded band (13) of flexible material is placed between each pair of front and rear side parts (19, 21 and 20, 22 respectively) which lie opposite one another in the folded state of the blank, and the free ends of the bands are fastened to adjacent side parts. The invention also relates to an article manufactured in accordance with the method.			

**FOR THE PURPOSES OF INFORMATION ONLY**

Codes used to identify States party to the PCT on the front pages of pamphlets publishing international applications under the PCT.

AT	Austria	GB	United Kingdom	MR	Mauritania
AU	Australia	GE	Georgia	MW	Malawi
BB	Barbados	GN	Guinea	NE	Niger
BE	Belgium	GR	Greece	NL	Netherlands
BF	Burkina Faso	HU	Hungary	NO	Norway
BG	Bulgaria	IE	Ireland	NZ	New Zealand
BJ	Benin	IT	Italy	PL	Poland
BR	Brazil	JP	Japan	PT	Portugal
BY	Belarus	KE	Kenya	RO	Romania
CA	Canada	KG	Kyrgyzstan	RU	Russian Federation
CF	Central African Republic	KP	Democratic People's Republic of Korea	SD	Sudan
CG	Congo	KR	Republic of Korea	SE	Sweden
CH	Switzerland	KZ	Kazakhstan	SI	Slovenia
CI	Côte d'Ivoire	LI	Liechtenstein	SK	Slovakia
CM	Cameroon	LK	Sri Lanka	SN	Senegal
CN	China	LU	Luxembourg	TD	Chad
CS	Czechoslovakia	LV	Latvia	TG	Togo
CZ	Czech Republic	MC	Monaco	TJ	Tajikistan
DE	Germany	MD	Republic of Moldova	TT	Trinidad and Tobago
DK	Denmark	MG	Madagascar	UA	Ukraine
ES	Spain	ML	Mali	US	United States of America
FI	Finland	MN	Mongolia	UZ	Uzbekistan
FR	France			VN	Viet Nam
GA	Gabon				

**A METHOD OF MANUFACTURING A PANTS-TYPE DIAPER OR A  
SANITARY PANTY, AND ONE SUCH ABSORBENT ARTICLE**

5       The present invention relates to a method of manufacturing  
an absorbent article in the form of a pants-type diaper or  
a sanitary panty, beginning with a flat diaper blank which  
comprises an elongated absorbent body enclosed between two  
casing sheets which at opposing front and rear end parts of  
the absorbent body have side parts which extend laterally  
10      beyond the absorbent body on both sides thereof, said  
method comprising the step of folding the blank about a  
transverse axis so that the end edges of said side parts  
will lie edge-to-edge. The invention also relates to an  
absorbent article manufactured in accordance with the  
15      method.

Present-day all-in-one diapers are being replaced to an  
ever greater extent with pants-type diapers, or so-called  
training pants, for slightly older diaper-wearing children.  
20      Pants-type diapers have a number of good features. They fit  
well on the wearer, they are easy to put on and take off  
with the child in a standing position, they sit firmly in  
place after having been put onto a child, and conform to  
the anatomy of the child as the child moves, in a comfort-  
able fashion. Moreover, pants-type diapers resemble  
25      conventional underpants and it is easy to understand how  
they shall be used, thereby in many instances enabling  
somewhat older diaper-wearing children to perform them-  
selves the simple operations required in putting on the  
30      pant diaper.

EP-A2-0,320,991 defines a pants-type diaper which is  
produced by folding a blank of the aforesaid kind in the  
manner described in the introduction, whereafter the  
35      bordering side edges of the side parts are fastened  
together by ultrasonic welding or gluing. A pants-type  
diaper manufactured in this way will necessarily have at

least two outwardly standing side seams which, when the diaper is worn, are subjected to loads or forces that are directed generally at right angles to the bonded surfaces, i.e. to so-called peel forces. Consequently, the side seams 5 must be sufficiently strong to withstand the forces to which they are subjected, meaning that a high degree of precision is required when joining the surfaces together and also when selecting the materials to be joined. Neither are the seams attractive from an aesthetic point of view, 10 which is a negative feature from a commercial aspect.

An object of the present invention is to provide a pants-type diaper or a sanitary panty having side seams which from a loading aspect are more advantageous than side seams 15 that are subjected to peeling forces, and which has aesthetically attractive side parts.

This object is achieved in accordance with the invention by means of a method of the kind defined in the introduction 20 which is characterized by placing at least one folded band of flexible material between each pair of front and rear side parts that lie opposite one another in the folded state of the blank, and by fastening the free ends of the band to respective adjacent side parts.

25 According to one preferred embodiment of the invention, the folded bands are placed on and fastened to the front or rear side parts of the blank prior to folding said blank, and the band is folded in a bellows like fashion prior to 30 fastening the same to the side parts.

This method can also be applied even when the blanks form a continuous string, i.e. prior to separating the individual blanks from said string.

35 When, for reasons of a production/technical nature, the blanks are separated individually from a continuous string

of blanks prior to bringing the side parts together, it is proposed in accordance with the invention that a method of the kind defined in the introduction will include the characterizing steps of folding at least one band of 5 flexible material around each pair of the front and rear side parts of the web which oppose one another in the folded state of said web, and by fastening the free ends of the band to its adjacent side part.

10 The invention also relates to an absorbent article in the form of a pants-type diaper or sanitary panty, which comprises an elongated absorbent body enclosed between two casing sheets which have at opposing front and rear end parts of the absorbent body side parts which extend laterally beyond said body on both sides thereof, wherein 15 the opposing front and rear side parts are mutually joined, characterized in that a separate piece of material extends between each pair of mutually opposing front and rear side parts and forms a join between these side parts such that 20 said join will be subjected essentially to shear forces when the article is worn.

According to one preferred embodiment of the invention, the 25 pieces of material joining the side parts are generally non-elastic and the separate pieces of material are attached to the inner surfaces of the side parts. The separate pieces of material are comprised of two separate parts which are joined together by a releasable and refastenable fastener means, for instance in the form of a 30 row of press studs, projections and recesses, mutually coacting hooks and eyes, adhesive coatings or self-fastening or hook and loop fasteners.

35 The invention will now be described in more detail with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which

Figure 1 illustrates schematically a plant machinery for manufacturing a pants-type diaper in accordance with the invention and by means of an inventive method;

5      Figure 2 illustrates from above a part of the web shown in Figure 1 in a manufacturing stage immediately prior to folding and joining together the blanks to form pants-type diapers;

10     Figure 3 is a sectional view taken on the line III-III in Figure 2;

Figure 4 is a perspective view of a pants-type diaper manufactured in accordance with the inventive method;

15     Figure 5 illustrates a bellows-folded band suitable for application on an inventive pants-type diaper blank manufactured by means of the transverse production method, i.e. the absorbent bodies have been placed on a moving web of material with the longitudinal axes of the bodies extending at right angles to the direction of web movement;

20     Figure 6 illustrates a bellows-folded band suited for application on an inventive pants-type diaper blank manufactured in accordance with the longitudinal production method, i.e. the absorbent bodies have been placed on a moving web of material with the longitudinal axes of the bodies extending parallel with the direction of web movement;

25     Figure 7 and 8 illustrate folded bands which include releasable and refastenable fastener means, suitable for application on an inventive pants-type diaper blank; and

30     Figure 9 illustrates in perspective a second embodiment of a pants-type diaper which includes the bands of Figure 7 in its side parts.

Figure 1 illustrates schematically the plant machinery for manufacturing pants-type diapers, including a conveyor path 1 by means of which casing material 2 taken from a storage reel 3 is conveyed from left to right in Figure 1. Located downstream of the reel 3 is a device 4 which lays absorbent bodies 5 at regular intervals on the underlying web of casing material 2. Located downstream of the device 4 is a device 6 which lays elastic elements in a specific pattern onto or immediately above the web of casing material 2. These elastic elements, of which one 7 is shown schematically in Figure 1 and which are preferably comprised of elastic threads or ribbons, form the waist and leg elastic of the manufactured pants-type diaper. Located downstream of the device 6 are guide rollers 8 which function to guide a second web of casing material 9 onto the first web 2, while downstream of the guide rollers 8, there is located a device 11 which brings the webs of casing material together and fastens the webs to one another at those parts thereof which lie outside the absorbent bodies 5. The plant machinery hitherto described functions in the same way as the plant machinery used to manufacture conventional all-in-one diapers and the composite product leaving the device 11 will be comprised of a continuous string of pants-type diaper blanks which, similar to the all-in-one diapers produced in conventional plants, includes an absorbent body which is enclosed between two casing sheets and also elastic elements. At this stage of manufacture, the pants-type diaper blank differs from a typical diaper blank mainly in that the waist elastic has a different form to the waist elastic with which a diaper blank may be provided, as will be made more apparent in the following. The devices 4, 6, 8 and 11 are preferably known devices suitable for producing a pants-type diaper blank of the aforesaid kind. Since a detailed description of the construction of these devices is not needed to acquire an understanding of the invention, the devices will not be further described.

Located downstream of the device 11 is a device 12 which functions to attach folded bands 13 to the underlying moving web of mutually connected blanks. The device 12 will preferably include plungers that are operative in pressing 5 glue-coated bands 13 against the casing sheet 9.

Figure 2 illustrates from above a section of the web of mutually joined blanks subsequent to the web exiting from the device 12. The section illustrated in the Figure 10 includes a complete pants-type diaper blank B and parts of two mutually adjacent blanks A and C. As will be seen from the Figure, the device 6 lays-out a plurality of elastic threads 7 which extend sequentially in the transverse direction of the blank and which form the waist elastic of a manufactured pants-type diaper, and also lays-out around 15 openings 15 cut from the web elastic threads 14 which form the leg elastic of a manufactured pants-type diaper. The openings are preferably cut from the web when joining the casing sheets together with the aid of some appropriate 20 means, for instance by means of a punch included in the device 11 or located immediately downstream thereof.

The blanks A, B, C include a front edge 16, a rear edge 17, a central part 18 delimited by the opposing long edges of 25 the absorbent body 5 and the extensions of said long edges, front side parts 19, 20 on both sides of the central part 18, and rear side parts 21, 22 which are delimited by the respective front edge 16 and rear edge 17, the openings 15 lying on respective sides of the central part, and the 30 imaginary separation lines between the individual blanks A, B and C, which are shown in dash-dotted lines in Figure 2. When applicable, the parts 19-22 of the various diapers have been further identified in Figure 2 with the aid of 35 suffixes A-C, in order to clearly distinguish between corresponding parts of different blanks. As shown in Figure 3, the bands 13 attached to the side parts 19, 20 are single-folded and are disposed with respective folds

extending parallel with the side edges of the side parts, so that those edges of the band that are folded towards one another in said side parts will face one another.

5       Pants-type diapers are produced from the blanks shown in Figures 2 and 3, simply by folding the blanks in the direction indicated by the arrow in Figure 3, so that the edges 16 and 17 will lie opposite one another, and by fastening the casing sheet 9 to the bands 13 in conjunction therewith. Glue beads 23 are suitably applied to the single-folded bands 13 in conjunction with bringing the edges 16, 17 together. Naturally, the glue beads may instead be applied to the casing sheet 9 on the rear side parts 21, 22 prior to folding the blanks.

15       The plant illustrated in Figure 1 includes downstream of the device 11 a device 24 by means of which the web of blanks is folded together and the front and rear side parts of the blanks are joined to one another. The device 24 may 20 include fixed guide means 25 having mutually successively converging side walls, plunger means 26 which intermittently press the rear side parts of the blanks against the front side parts thereof, applicator means 27 for applying glue to the folded bands or to the rear side 25 parts, and fixed guide means 28 having side walls which successively diverge from one another.

30       The web moving through the guide means 28 is thus comprised of a string of mutually joined pants-type diapers which after exiting from the guide means 28 are separated from one another by means of an appropriate cutting tool 29 and conveyed by suitable conveying means 30 to a packaging station.

35       Figure 4 is a perspective view of a pants-type diaper manufactured in accordance with the aforescribed method. A pants-type diaper is intended to be put on in the same

way as a pair of underpants and is characterized by an elasticated waist part which can be stretched so that the diaper can be drawn readily over the wearer's hips when putting on or taking off the pant diaper, and the elasticity of which is such that a worn pant diaper will be held securely in position by the contraction forces acting in the waist part of the diaper. In order to fulfil these functional requirements while, at the same time, restricting the number of production sizes, the pants-type diaper will preferably have a stretch which is greater than 5 80%, i.e. the circumference of the waist part shall be 1.8 times the extension of the circumference of the waist part of a removed pant diaper in a non-stretched state. The total contraction force in the waist part, i.e. the sum of 10 the force contributed by elastication provided in the front part, the rear part and the side parts, will preferably 15 exceed 3 N.

The pants-type diaper illustrated in Figure 4 is constructed in the same way as the pants-type diaper described in 20 Swedish Patent Application No. 9200663-4, and includes an absorbent body 5 enclosed between an inner and an outer casing sheet 9 and 2 respectively. The inner casing sheet 9 is liquid-permeable and is comprised, for instance, of 25 nonwoven material compiled from fibres of polyethylene, polypropylene, polyester or mixtures thereof. Viscose fibres may also be used. It is also conceivable to form the inner casing sheet from a perforated plastic sheet, for instance a perforated polyethylene sheet. The outer casing sheet 2 is liquid-impermeable or at least hydrophobic and may, for instance, comprise a sheet of polyethylene or 30 nonwoven material which has been coated with or laminated with polyolefins, so as to be made liquid-impermeable or at least hydrophobic. For aesthetic and psychological reasons, 35 the outer casing sheet 2 may be comprised of two layers, an inner liquid-impermeable layer and a layer of fabric-like material disposed outside the inner layer. The wearer will

then see and feel the pant diaper as a fabric garment rather than as a plastic garment. When the outer casing sheet has this latter construction, it is not necessary for the liquid-impermeable sheet to have the same extension as the fabric-like sheet, but may be smaller than said sheet, for instance liquid-impermeable casing material can be omitted from the side parts of the pant diaper.

10 The absorbent body 5 may contain cellulose fluff pulp with or without an admixture of particles of so-called superabsorbent material and/or thermoplastic melt fibres, and may be comprised of one or more layers.

15 The waist part 41 of the pants-type diaper illustrated in Figure 4 includes a plurality of sequentially mounted elastic threads 7, each of which extends transversely around the circumference of the waist part. In this way, there is formed a relatively broad elastic waist part. As will be understood, elastic ribbons, bands or the like may be used instead of elastic threads, or other elastically stretchable material can be used, such as elastically stretchable plastic film, an elastically stretchable nonwoven material, or like material.

25 Similar to a pair of underpants, the pants-type diaper illustrated in Figure 4 has a waist opening and two leg openings, which are provided with leg elastic in a conventional manner. The pant diaper is put on by inserting the legs of the wearer through the leg openings and then drawing the pant diaper up over the wearer's hips. The contraction forces exerted by the elastic elements at the waist opening, i.e. at the uppermost part of the waist part 41, are preferably greater than the contraction forces exerted in the remainder of the waist part. This will ensure that the pant diaper will remain seated in its intended position, even when the absorbent body is full of urine.

Thus, when the pants-type diaper is worn, the join between the bands 13 and the casing sheet 9 will be affected essentially only by forces that act in the circumferential direction of the waist part, said joins therewith solely being subjected to shear forces. As a result of the construction of the inventive pant diaper, the joins will not be subjected to peeling forces that are unfavourable from a loading aspect. Consequently, the requirements placed on the properties of these joins are much less stringent than the requirements placed on the joins of known pants-type diapers. The joins produced by the inventive method are also attractive from an aesthetic aspect and fulfil the purpose of imitating conventional underpants in a much better manner than the earlier known pants-type diapers.

The inventive method also provides certain technical manufacturing advantages over the known method of joining together the side parts of a pants-type diaper taught by the aforesaid EP-A2-0,320,991. When manufacturing the known pants-type diaper, a greater degree of precision is required when joining the edges of the side parts together, both with regard to folding the blanks so that the side edges of the front and rear side parts will lie edge-to-edge, and with regard to the actual joining process, in which a welding or gluing unit must be guided with the same precision. When practicing the inventive method, it is immaterial from a functional aspect whether or not the bands are slightly displaced from their intended position on the front side parts when mounting the bands on the underlying web or string of blanks, or whether or not the glue beads 23 (Figure 3) are slightly displaced laterally from their intended position subsequent to said application, provided of course that the bands are dimensioned to permit such deviations. The same advantages are, of course, obtained when other methods, such as ultrasonic or heat-sealing methods are used to fasten the bands and

casing material together instead of glue. Because the joins are only subjected to shear forces, there is a greater freedom in the type of join chosen, for instance the join used may be a mechanical join of a self-fastening type.

5

Another advantage is that the circumferential extension of the bands 13 can be varied to a large extent, and if desired this extension can be made sufficiently large to enable the side parts of the diaper to be comprised almost completely of said bands. This construction will reduce the wastage of casing material, since the lateral extension of the openings 15 in the string or web of blanks will be reduced to a corresponding extent. However, in the case of this construction, it is not possible to attach the bands in a single-folded state to the pants-type diaper blank, since the bands would then be severed when cutting the individual blanks from the blank string. In order to enable bands of greater extension in the circumferential direction of the manufactured diaper to be applied, it is necessary to fold the bands in a bellows fashion prior to application, so as to restrict the extension of the bands in the transverse direction of the blanks. Figure 5 illustrates an example of a bellows-folded band 31 which can be applied to a pants-type diaper blank in the same way as the bands 13.

25

The aforescribed method of mounting the bands on the side parts of a pants-type diaper blank can be applied in both transverse and longitudinal production of pants-type diapers, although with the difference that in the case of longitudinal production, it is necessary to cut the individual blanks from the blank string prior to folding the rear side parts onto the front side parts.

35

When the blanks are advanced in the form of individual blanks, the bands can be applied to the casing sheet 2 instead of to the casing sheet 9, by first fastening one free end of the bands to the front side parts of the blank,

and thereafter folding the blank. The bands, which are initially not folded and flat, are then folded in over the rear side parts of the folded blank and fastened thereto. Naturally, it is also possible to apply the flat bands to 5 the front side parts of the individual, flat blanks, whereafter the blank and then the bands are folded, wherewith the bands will be attached to the inner surfaces of the front side parts and the outer surfaces of the rear side parts.

10

In this regard, it is pointed out that the bands may, of course, be fastened to the front and the rear side parts in a reverse manner to that described, i.e. the bands may be first fastened to the rear side parts and then to the front 15 side parts.

Figure 6 illustrates a band 32 which can be fastened to a ready folded blank, by passing the blank side parts that have been folded onto one another between the free edges of 20 the band 32 and pressing these edges firmly onto the side parts, by application of an external force.

According to one variant of the method described with reference to Figures 1-4, the folded bands can be passed in 25 between the front and the rear side parts during the final stage of folding the blanks and fastened thereto in one single stage.

As mentioned in the foregoing, pants-type diapers have a 30 number of good features, but also some drawbacks. It is difficult to change a pants-type diaper with the wearer in a lying position, and requires the removal of a garment worn outside the pant diaper when making the change. Neither can a used pants-type diaper be rolled up and 35 sealed in the same way as an all-in-one diaper. Furthermore, the diaper wearer is liable to be dirtied when removing a used pant diaper containing feces.

These drawbacks can be overcome in a particularly simple way with an inventive pants-type diaper, simply by using bands that are comprised of two parts which are joined together by means of a releasable and refastenable fastener means. Figures 7 and 8 are respective cross-sectional and side views of two such bands 33 and 34, while Figure 9 illustrates a pants-type diaper provided with a band 33. The band 33 is comprised of two parts 35, 36 which are mutually joined by a row of projections 37 projecting from the part 35 and passing through a row of openings formed in the part 36. This enables the pants-type diaper illustrated in Figure 9 to be removed and replaced without needing to fully remove trousers, pants or like garment worn outside the pant diaper, by loosening the band parts 35, 36 from one another so that either the rear part or the front part can be passed between the legs of the wearer. A replacement pants-type diaper can thereafter be put on by loosening the band parts of said pants-type diaper from each other, whereafter the front or rear part of the replacement pants-type diaper is inserted between the legs of the wearer. The two band parts are then fastened together, by inserting the row of projections on one band part through the row of openings in the other part, whereafter the pants-type diaper is drawn up to its correct wearing position in the same way as a pair of underpants, unless this has already been done when refastening the replacement pant diaper.

Figure 8 illustrates schematically a band 34 which is comprised of two parts 38, 39 which are mutually joined by means of a mechanical fastener means 40, for instance a self-fastening or hook and loop band. The fastening means illustrated in Figures 7-9 merely represent examples of suitable fastener devices and it will be understood that the pants-type diaper shown in Figure 9 can be provided with a number of other types of fasteners lying within the expertise of a normal person skilled in this art. For instance, adhesive fasteners can be used, and also other

types of mechanical fasteners other than those described, such as buttons and buttonholes, hooks and eyes, etc.

5       Although the invention has been described and illustrated solely with reference to pants-type diapers, it will be understood that the invention can also be applied to sanitary panties, i.e. panties in which absorbent bodies for absorbing menstrual fluids or light incontinence discharges are integrated.

10       It will be understood that the described embodiments can be modified within the scope of the invention. For instance, the absorbent body may have a form different to that described and may include several layers, which in turn means that the described plant for manufacturing pants-type diapers in accordance with the invention will be modified correspondingly. Furthermore, the pants-type diaper blanks can be folded and the front and rear side parts of the blanks brought together with the aid of means other than those described. The individual pants-type diapers can be cut from the continuous web of blanks in conjunction with bringing the front and the rear side parts of the blanks together, instead of in a separate following stage. Furthermore, more than one band can be used to fasten the mutually opposing front and rear side parts. The invention is therefore restricted solely by the scope of the following Claims.

15

20

25

## CLAIMS

1. A method of manufacturing an absorbent article in the form of a pants-type diaper or a sanitary panty, starting from a flat blank (A-C) which includes an elongated absorbent body (5) enclosed between two casing sheets (2, 9) which at opposing front and rear end parts of the absorbent body have side parts (19, 20 and 21, 22 respectively) which extend laterally beyond the body on both sides thereof, said method comprising the step of folding the blank around a transverse axis so that the end edges (16, 17) of the side parts lie edge-to-edge, characterized by placing at least one folded band (13) of flexible material between each pair of front and rear side parts (19, 21 and 20, 22 respectively) which oppose one another in the folded state of the blank, and by fastening the free ends of said bands to adjacent side parts.
2. A method according to Claim 1, characterized by placing the folded bands (13) and fastening said bands to the front or the rear side parts (19, 20 and 21, 22 respectively) prior to folding the blank (A-C).
3. A method of manufacturing an absorbent article in the form of a pants-type diaper or a sanitary panty, starting from a flat blank which comprises an elongated absorbent body enclosed between two casing sheets which at opposing front and rear end parts of the absorbent body have side parts which extend laterally beyond the body and on opposite sides thereof, wherein the blank is folded about a transverse axis so that the end edges of the side parts lie edge-to-edge, characterized by folding at least one band of flexible material about each pair of front and rear side parts which oppose one another in the folded state of the blank, and by fastening the free ends of the bands to adjacent side parts.

4. A method according to any one of the preceding Claims, characterized by folding the bands (31, 32) in a bellows-like fashion prior to their attachment to the side parts.

5 5. An absorbent article in the form of a pants-type diaper or sanitary panty, comprising an elongated absorbent body (5) enclosed between two casing sheets (2, 9) which at opposing front and rear end parts of the absorbent body have side parts (19, 20 and 21, 22 respectively) which 10 extend laterally beyond said body on both sides thereof, wherein opposing front and rear side parts (19, 21 and 20, 22 respectively) are joined together, characterized in that a separate piece of material (13) extends between each pair of opposing front and rear side parts (19, 21 and 20, 22 respectively) and forms a join between these side parts 15 such that said join will be subjected essentially to shear forces when the article is worn.

20 6. An article according to Claim 5, characterized in that the pieces of material (13) joining the side parts are essentially non-elastic.

25 7. An article according to Claim 5 or 6, characterized in that the separate pieces of material (13) are joined to the inner surfaces of the side parts (19-22).

30 8. An article according to Claim 5 or 6, characterized in that the separate pieces of material (32) are joined to the outer surfaces of the side parts (19-22).

35 9. An article according to Claim 5 or 6, characterized in that each separate piece of material is joined to the inner surface of one of the front or rear side parts and to the outer surface of the other front or rear side part.

10. An article according to any one of Claims 5-9, characterized in that the separate pieces of material (33;

34) are comprised of two separate parts (35, 36; 38, 39) which are mutually joined together by a releasable and refastenable fastener means.

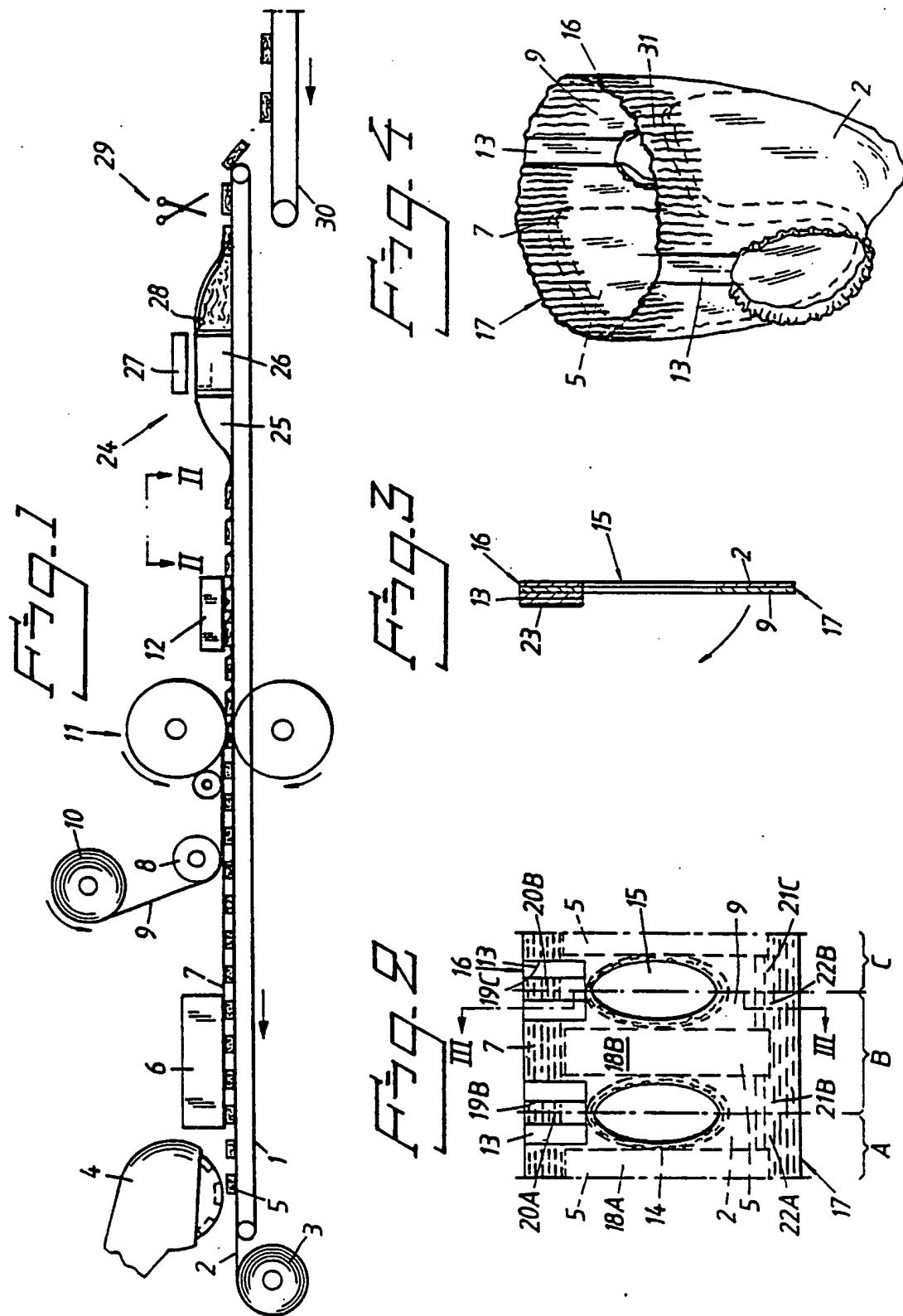
5 11. An absorbent article according to Claim 10, characterized in that the fastener means comprises a row of press studs.

10 12. An absorbent article according to Claim 10, characterized in that the fastener means is comprised of projections (37) which project from one (35) of the separate parts of said piece and which pass through openings in the other (36) of the separate parts of said piece.

15 13. An absorbent article according to Claim 10, characterized in that the fastener means is comprised of mutually coacting hooks and eyes.

20 14. An absorbent article according to Claim 10, characterized in that the fastener means is comprised of adhesive coatings.

25 15. An absorbent article according to Claim 10, characterized in that the fastener means is comprised of a self-fastening or hook and loop band (40).



2 / 2

Fig. 5



Fig. 6

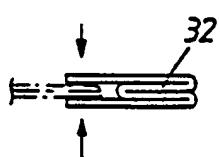


Fig. 7

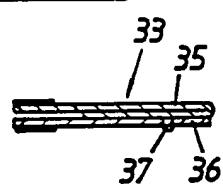


Fig. 8

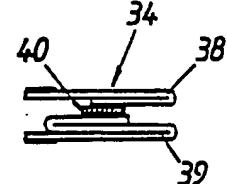
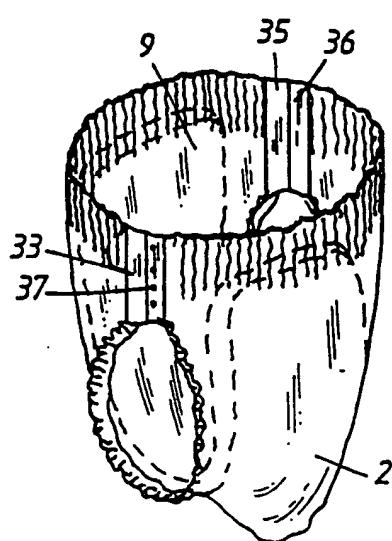


Fig. 9



## INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/SE 95/00390

## A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC6: A61F 13/56 // A61F 13/15

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

## B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

IPC6: A61F

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

SE,DK,FI,NO classes as above

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)

## C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	GB 2130888 A (THE PROCTER & GAMBLE COMPANY), 13 June 1984 (13.06.84), page 2, line 28 - line 36, figures 1,2 --	1-15
X	GB 2144637 A (THE PROCTER & GAMBLE COMPANY), 13 March 1985 (13.03.85), figures 1,3 --	1-15
A	US 5074854 A (KAREN M. DAVIS), 24 December 1991 (24.12.91), figure 1, claim 27 -----	1

Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.  See patent family annex.

- \* Special categories of cited documents:
- "A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance
- "E" earlier document but published on or after the international filing date
- "L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)
- "O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means
- "P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed
- "T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention
- "X" document of particular relevance: the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone
- "Y" document of particular relevance: the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art
- "&" document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search	Date of mailing of the international search report 21 -07- 1995
19 July 1995	Name and mailing address of the ISA/ Swedish Patent Office Box 5055, S-102 42 STOCKHOLM Facsimile No. + 46 8 666 02 86

**INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT**

Information on patent family members

International application No.

PCT/SE 95/00390

Patent document cited in search report	Publication date	Patent family member(s)		Publication date
GB-A- 2130888	13/06/84	AU-B-	555369	18/09/86
		AU-A-	2170183	31/05/84
		CA-A-	1209753	19/08/86
		EP-A,B,B	0112655	04/07/84
		SE-T3-	0112655	
		JP-A-	59144601	18/08/84
		US-A-	4515595	07/05/85
GB-A- 2144637	13/03/85	US-A-	4555244	26/11/85
US-A- 5074854	24/12/91	AT-T-	111723	15/10/94
		AU-A-	8305591	17/03/92
		DE-D,T-	69104209	09/03/95
		EP-A,B-	0544703	09/06/93
		SE-T3-	0544703	
		ES-T-	2060402	16/11/94
		JP-T-	6500153	06/01/94
		NZ-A-	239523	25/11/94
		PT-A-	98748	29/10/93
		TR-A-	25603	01/07/93
		WO-A-	9203113	05/03/92